4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 AUGO Toda AUGO

I took the liberty of doing so in one or two instances, but always found them totally destitute of either utensils or furniture, and even of fixtures, beyond a raised earthen ledge along the foot of the wall, answering the purpose of a table. They were all without any light, beyond that which could find an entrance through the aperture which does duty as a door.

The total strength of the Todas at the present day is probably under eight hundred, of all ages. It is impossible to form an estimate of the original importance and numbers of such a people; but there are indications of former Toda *munds* where none now exist, so that the tribe has doubtless been more numerous at some past epoch.

It is the boast of the Todas that they are hereditary and original lords of the soil, and owners of the whole of the Nilgiris, a claim fully allowed by the other tribes, as evidenced by their paying tribute for the land, and owning a sort of feudal vassalage. Each Toda family has its own territorial property, or district, and the Vadacas living on it are, as already stated, simply tenants, paying an annual tax, or rent in kind, for the land they live on or cultivate. We also, I believe, acknowledge their title by paying a yearly tax for our occupation. The natural peacefulness of the Toda tribe, together with their ignorance of war, make it improbable that their ancestors ever forcibly usurped the territory, and they have doubtless always been regarded by the other tribes as a superior race, entitled to it from immemorial possession and residence.

Their language affords no clue to their origin, and is as strange and peculiar as themselves. It is deep-toned, harsh, and difficult of pronunciation, and without written character. It is neither spoken nor understood by the other hill-tribes with whom they are in almost daily contact, though one would have imagined that the necessity for communication for purposes of barter or exchange would, in course of time, have caused a mutual knowledge of their languages; but it is the Todas only who have acquired the means of communication, having just so much knowledge of the speech of their vassals as is demanded by the most ordinary requirements. The Toda tongue is said to comprise words of Sanskrit and Tamul origin, and to have a certain limited similarity in grammatical structure to the latter language. In all other respects, it differs widely from it or any known tongue either of the vast Indian empire, or of any other country. Recent

4: King G-5 (no date) 1870 Nilgo Toda Nilgo

582 of which is understood to ratify the agreement. When, in due
583 course of time, the marriage takes place, the bride, who is probably about fifteen or sixteen years of age, receives from her father a dowry of several buffaloes, together with necklaces, armlets, and ear-rings. The ceremony is generally celebrated by a dance, which, though not of a very exciting description, seems to afford sufficient satisfaction to these cheerful, good-natured people. It consists of stamping on each foot alternately, the body being jerked half round at one step, and back again at the next, to the time of a very monotonous song.

843 When about to become a mother, in place of receiving every
851 comfort and consideration, the Toda woman is sent out, or, what amounts to the same thing, is by custom expected to go out into the forest, and there remain alone, protected only in case of stormy weather by the shelter of the bushes. After the child is born, it is not allowed to be seen by any-one but its parents for some weeks, at the end of which time it is duly named and presented in public.

582 It is a fact worth noticing that, notwithstanding the scarcity
583 of women (said to be owing to the practice of female infanticide which prevailed till within a very few years ago), the Todas never contract marriages with the other tribes, though living together on most friendly terms. That there never has been any mixture of the races, is sufficiently evident from the strongly marked distinctions that continue to exist between them.

It is not less singular, on the other hand, that, in spite of the system of intermarriage which has thus prevailed among the Todas for many generations, or it may be ages, there should not only be no sign of physical deterioration, but that both sexes should be so remarkable for their stature, pleasing exterior, and noble bearing. This would seem to confirm the theory that the marriage of relations, however closely connected, would, in cases of mutual faultless constitution and physical form, result in these excellences of the parents being transmitted, just as in the opposite case physical and mental defects common to both are transmitted, and even augmented.

764 When a death occurs among the Todas, the corpse, covered over with certain aromatic herbs, is left in the hut either till distant friends are summoned, or until the occurrence of a propitious day for the burial; these people being firm believers in

9:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1938) 1939 AW60 Toda AW60

794 184 563 177 [869] community are still in many repects Todas. The new generation however is growing up without intimate knowledge of things Toda and in most cases without knowledge o the Toda language, since there is an admixture of Tamilians in the community and all formal instruction is carried on in the Tamil language. New converts may and probably will be made who will introduce fresh Toda influences. But it is to be expected that the community will in time become so Tamilized that those born into it will hardly differ at all from other Tamil Christians and fresh converts will find few Toda traditions there to strengthen.

794 184 564 583 It still remains to discuss the attitude of the tribe towards the Christian community. Theoretically since the Christians have "broken caste," have given up the tribal religious and social rites and have adopted some habits which are repugnant to the tribe, *e.g.*, meat-eating,[10] there should be an absolute break n the relations between the two communities. The chief marks of outcasting in most Hindu communities are refusal of the caste to intermarry with the outcastes and also to interdine. The latter is based on the conception of pollution; a person who is not of the caste and who does not observe the customs of the caste, especially in such intimate matters as preparation and consumption of food, will produce equal uncleanness in the caste-members, necessitating elaborate purifications. The Todas are not in a strict sense a caste, though conceptions of purity and pollution are prominent in their culture. They will not, for example, go into a Kota village since the Kotas are unclean by occupation (blacksmithing and pottery) and by eating habits (meat and even carion are regularly eaten); all transactions with Kotas at a Kota village must be carried on at the green outside the Kota village. Nor is a Kota allowed to enter a Toda village. Interdining between Todas and Kotas is non-existent. The Badagas however do not suffer from the restrictions that the Kotas do. Badagas may enter Toda villages and those in certain formalized relations with the Todas are invited to Toda ceremonies and eat with them at the feasts that follow. The European is on about the same footing as the Badaga, though he eats meat. I have been invited on several occasions to take part in the feast following a Toda ceremony and my sitting in the row of Toda feasters did not inconvenience them as that of a Kota would. The Toda Christian also is invited to eat at such feasts and does eat. He is not however allowed into a Toda dairy, any more than any other profane person is, nor is he allowed into a Toda house, in this respect being like the European. The European may enter the

564 648 186 [574] [184] [194]

[10] See *Toda Culture Thirty-five Years after*, p. 118, for the somewhat equivocal attitude of the tribe to this habit.

[113]

11:Emeneau L-5 (1935-1938) 1939
AW60 Toda AW60

841 Finally we come to the question of the woman's personal hygiene during menses. As is very usual, a bath is prescribed after menstruation is over, to remove the last traces of uncleanliness. But, very unusual among primitive communities, the Toda woman during her period wears a sanitary napkin designed to absorb the flow of blood. Formerly it was made of moss wrapped into a pad with a piece of cloth and attached before and behind to the usual silver or brass chain girdle or, failing this, to a waist-string. At present rags [198] are more common in the munds than formerly and the pad may be made wholly of rags. The pad is changed when necessary, and all discarded ones [191] are burnt. Such pads are also used by Kota and by Badaga women, but their use has not been reported, so far as I know, for the women of any other Indian community.

841 794 563 177 The contrast between the menstrual regulations of the Todas and those of other Indian communities is neatly pointed by the habits of the small Toda Christian community. The converted Toda women have not been sufficient in number to provide wives for all the Toda men converts and the deficiency has been made up by converted Tamilian women. The two sets of women continue their pre-Christian customs during menstruation. The Toda women wear the sanitary napkin and continue to cook and to live in all parts of the house. The Tamilian women, on the other hand, wear no napkins, refuse to cook and will not even enter the room where the cooking-hearth is built.